thereby showing an increase of Rs. 504.25 crores. Main reasons for the increase in imports is the higher imports of items like Petroleum and Petroleum products, Fertilizers, Edible Oil, Non-ferrous Metals, Iron and Steel, Precious & Semi-Precious stones, Project goods, Organic and Inorganic chemicals etc., which are essential for domestic consumption or export production.

(c) A series of initiatives have been taken to promote exports. These are designed to generate surpluses for exports, to induce the production of goods contemporary in technology and competitive in prices and to make exports profitable. Simultaneously, efforts are being made to effect efficient import substitution, particularly in the area of bulk imports, to reduce the trade deficit.

Incidents of Bomb blasts reported from various parts of the country

866. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the month of September, 1988 a number of incidents of bomb blasts were reported from various parts of the country, including Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Delhi;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and the number of persons killed/injured as a result thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken to check such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Information is given in the attached statement. (*See* below)

(c) Various steps like colletcion of intelligence, search of suspicious persons, mobile patrolling, 'Nakabandis', surveillance at likely places visited by suspected persons and deployment of armed pickets at vulnerable places and strategic points, haye been adopted by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.

Statement

ASSAM: During September, 1988, 6 incidents of bomb throwing/explosions took place at Samthaibar (September 5), Kokrajhar (September 7), Sapkhowa (September 6), Doomdooma (September 8), Dakhin (Hopgur) (September 11) and Tezpur (September 13). In these incidents, a bus, a petrol tanker and a truck were among the targets. In incidents at Chowkibazar, Tezpur (September 13), a bomb exploded inside a shop and one of the 5 injured in the incident, succumber to injuries.

BIHAR: During the month, two explosions took place in Bihar. On September 21, a minor incident of explosion of a cracker took place without any casualities at Mahnwar and Lalganj (Dist Vaishali) during Muniipal election. In the second incident which took place at Dhaurani, P. S. Mokama, Dist. Patna, on September 29, 1988, two persons are killed when 8 bombs which were being manufactured by them exploded prematurely.

DELHI: In an incident of bomb explosion in a bus at Shahdra Bus Terminal on September 12, 1988, one person was killed and 19 others were injured.

GUJARAT: An explosion occured at a railway crossing near Sabarmati Railway Station on September 3, 1988, but none in the train was injured, nor was the track damaged. 5 persosns standing nearby were injured.

JAMMU & KASHMIR: Three incidents of explosions took place in the state at Badarwah (September 2) and Reasi (September 17/18—2). 3

miscreants were arrested in connection with the incidents.

KERALA: Some unidentified persons threw a bomb in Punalur on September 21. None was, however, injured in the incident and only a building got slightly damaged.

MIZORAM: On September 27, 1988, an accidental explosion took place at Aizwal and a grenade exploded when boys playing nearby tried to pull the lever of the grenade which was lying in a drain. 2 children were injured in the incident.

RAJASTHAN: A minor explosion took place in Ashoka Cinema Hall, Udaipur, on September 11, 1988, none was injured in the incident.

TAMIL NADU: A bomb was thrown near War Memorial in Madras city on September 19, 1988. None was injured.

TRIPURA: During a bandh organised by SFI|DYFI a bomb suspected to be a cracker exploded at Durai Shibbari (P. S. Kamalpur) on September 14 and one person was killed and another injured.

UTTAR PRADESH: An incident of bomb explosion took place at Allahabad on September 11 but none was injured in the incident.

WEST BENGAL: During the month 8 incidents of explosions took place in the State at Narayangarash (Midnapur—September 2), Barafkhana (Murshidabad—September 3), Mundakothi (Darjiling—September 6), Titagarh (September 13), Dubrajdighi, Titagarh, (2 incidents on September 13), Tegharia (North 24 Paraganas—September 28). In the incidents at Barafkhana, 3 persons were reported killed and one person each died at Titagarh and Tegharia due to the bomb explosions.

PUNJAB: In Punjab one incident of bomb explosion took place at Rajpura (September 3, district Patiala). In this incident one chiled was killed and 10 persons were injured.

CHANDIGARH: One bomb blast took place in Chandigarh during September, 1988, in which one person died.

Decrease in forest cover

867. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that of late the forest cover in the country has decreased from 16.89 per cent to 11 per cent recently;

(b) if so, what steps have since been taken to arrest the same;

(c) whether it is forbidden by law to replace forests with plantations of tea, cofee, spices, horticultural and medicinal plants and oil bearing crops; and

(d) if so, whether it is a fact that in many States like Punjab, Karnataka, etc. proposals have been cleared for non-forestry diversions?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) According to studies conducted by the Forest Survey of India with the help of satellite imagery, the extent of forest cover in the country for the years 1981—83 is estimated at 64.20 million hectares which is 19.52 per cent of the total geographical area of the country. Out of this 35.77 million hectares consists of good forest cover which is 10.88 per cent of the total geographical area.

(b) Steps taken to conserve forests are given in the statement attached. (*See* below)

(c) and (d) The forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 prohibits diversion of forest land for non-forest use, including plantation of tea, coffee, spices, horticultural and medicinal plants and oil bearing crops, without the